Take time to prepare information for proper newspaper story of 'big event'

As the big day approaches, you slowly work down that long list of items to take care of before you say, "I Do."

Near the bottom of the list, you find the item, "newspaper story." For some, this represents a nearly insurmountable obstacle. For others, it is merely one more task to complete before the wedding.

One thing is certain: everyone wants the story of their big day to be published. The beauty of a newspaper story is that it accomplishes three things -- it gives the married couple a keepseek in the form of newspaper clippings, it lets others know about the big event, and it records the wedding for posterity. Once a story is in print, it stays that way, and your great-grandchildren 100 years from now can read in the 1982 bound volume of the newspaper about the day their great-grandfolks tied the knot.

The two basic ingredients of the newspaper wedding article are the photograph and the story itself.

The photograph should be a five-by-seven-inch glossy black and white for best results. The key phrase here is "black and white." A color studio photograph usually works satisfactorily, but you can never be sure how the black-and-white transposition will turn out until it is in print. It is better to be safe than sorry: provide the newspaper with a good quality black-and-white glossy if at all possible.

The rules governing the written portion of the wedding article are less well defined. But the person compiling the information should remember one thing: the wedding story is news, and it should be written like a news story. To paraphrase an old (male) English professor, the story should be "like a woman's skirt -- long enough to cover the subject, but short enough to be interesting."

The first paragraph or two should contain all the essential elements of the story. An example:

"Miss Jane Doe and Mr. John Brown were united in marriage Sunday, May 23, 1982 at 4 p.m. in the Anytown Baptist Church. The Rev. Your Pastor presided over the double-ring ceremony."

After the lead paragraph, information should be listed in order of importance. Some couples choose to list the major elements of the wedding and go easy on the details. Others prefer an indepth description of the event.

It is best to remember that too many details make for a longer story which fewer people will read completely. The ideal path to take is a middle-of-the-road approach. List the major elements of the story, and provide enough detail to round out the article.

Some couples choose to write their own stories and submit them to the newspaper. Others would rather list the information they want in the story and let the newspaper's staff write the story.

The earlier you can get the information to the newspaper, the better, particularly if you want the newspaper to write the story. The deadline for the **Times-Virginian** is 2 p.m. Tuesday before that week's publication.

Remember that a newspaper is subject to space limitations, and it is always possible that a portion of the article will be cut or condensed to allow enough space to get the story in. Newspapers generally, however, make every effort to leave wedding stories unaltered, except for corrected grammar and spelling.

For engagement announcements, the same general rules apply as for the wedding stories. The photo should be a five-by-seven-inch black-and-white glossy, and the story should contain the essential elements of the announcement.

Nothing puts the finishing touches on that big event like a well written wedding story with a good photograph. Take a little time to plan what information you'll submit to the newspaper, and the memory of your wedding will shine as brightly as the event itself.

Gift ideas for the wedding party

The bride and groom are each expected to present their attendants with a gift to commemorate the happy occasion of their wedding, say the etiquette experts.

Chances are, the bride will decide to gift her maid of honor and bridesmaids with jewelry. Lockets and bracelets are the most popular jewelry items, surveys show. Charm bracelets and earrings are other popular jewelry choices. The bride can also give clothing, china or crystal, perfume and jewelry boxes if she prefers.

The groom will want to gift his best man and attendants with an appropriate reminder of the day, as well. High on his list, according to surveys, are

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To The Engaged Couples And Newlyweds - - -

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Flowers

They speak language of love

A BEAUTIFUL BRIDE, her loveliness enhanced by the beauty of flowers.

By Frances H. Paulette

The date has been set and the happy couple have a lot of plans to make for the forthcoming wedding. High on their list of priorities should be choosing a florist.

Flowers speak the language of love, buy they also reflect the taste of the couple and it is important for the florist to talk with the couple and find out just what kind of wedding they are planning.

Will it be a formal wedding? Or will the mood be more relaxed? Where will it be held and how much is in the budget for flowers are other important considerations.

"A good florist instinctively knows," say Marvin Mitchell of Elliott Florist and Gifts, "that each wedding should reflect the individual taste of the bride and groom, and flowers should enhance the wedding, whether large or small, formal or casual."

The florist will need to know, in addition to how much the couple wants to spend for flowers, what

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